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ST. DOMINIC AND THE ROSARY.

THE Rev. P. Holzapfel's much-discussed brochure, which we have repeatedly mentioned in these columns, is at length before us.*) It forms No. 12 of the "Publications of the Munich Seminar of Church History," edited by the eminent Prof. Knöpfler, and bears both the *Nil obstat* of the reverend author's immediate superior and the *Imprimatur* of the Vicar-General of the Archdiocese of Munich.

I.

P. Holzapfel introduces his preface with an expression of surprise at the sensation which his thesis on St. Dominic in his relation to the Rosary †] created, not only in Germany but throughout the Catholic world, despite the fact that it really contained nothing which had not already been said in substance by the Hollandists, the *Month*, the *Revue du Clergé français*, etc.

He next proceeds to refute the objection that the discussion of such questions is inopportune, an objection made even by some of those who are aware that certain traditional legends can no longer be sustained.

"This objection," he says, "would be well taken if it were intended to throw these things without any preparation upon the common people who are incapable of judging. Not that the truth should be withheld from these, but because the masses of the people are often best instructed in some matters by no longer teaching them in word or writing what is untrue. But this is not the question here. Shall Catholic Science be prevented, once doubts have arisen in such questions, from discussing them crit-

*) St. Dominikus und der Rosenkranz. Von P. Heribert Holzapfel, O. F. M. No. 12 der "Veroeffentlichungen aus dem Kirchenhistor- ischen Seminar Muenchen." Muenchen, 1903. Verlag der J. J. Lentner'schen Buchhandlung.

†) See No. 48, vol. ix. of THE REVIEW.

ically before universities and in scholarly publications which are read only by the educated?[†]) Shall and can these themes remain forever a '*Noli me tangere*'? Have the gigantic labors of the Bollandists been performed solely for the benefit of non-Catholics? If not, when is it opportune to debate such questions calmly and objectively? Can it ever be opportune to continue to teach legends which we know to be spurious? Is it better that Catholics calmly concede what can not be denied, or that they have to be compelled thereto by their enemies with a mischievous reference to their 'backwardness' and 'credulity'? No matter how low an opinion we may have of Catholic Science, we surely do not want to degrade her to the ignoble rôle of one who allows the enemy to get the best of her in all historical questions and who contents herself with repeating, under compulsion, what has been proved against her with scorn and ridicule. But if Catholic Science justly refuses to entertain any such proposal, if she endeavors to tell the truth even at the risk of speaking, here and there, to unwilling ears, she is convinced that by such procedure she does not injure the interests of the Church, but advances them. Of course, the Church must do her best to prevent the scandalizing of the weak; wherefore, I repeat it, themes such as these are not fit for the general; but, being the pillar of truth, she surely can not desire that orthodox scholars teach anything against their better knowledge or close their eyes to untenable legends which have nothing to do with the divine character of the Church. If this were the case, outsiders and even some Catholics of weak faith might be tempted to believe that the Church has reason to fear the destruction of such legends and that, if she does not desire nor possess the truth in minor points, she does not desire or possess it in those that are essential. These are no thoughts of mine, but such as you can hear expressed daily in any large city.

"Therefore I say, it is decidedly in the interest of the Church if those within her pale who cultivate learning, honestly seek the truth and (excepting, of course, the *chronique scandaleuse*) as honestly profess it. Really, it ought not to be necessary to dwell on this point, since our Holy Father Leo XIII., upon the occasion of the opening of the Vatican Archives, spoke the memorable words: 'Primam esse historiae legem, ne quid falsi dicere audeat, deinde ne quid veri non audeat.'[†]) Can we blame the Catholic historian if he chooses this sentence for his lodestar and motto? P. Grisar's observation really appears superfluous: 'That nothing is more unfounded than the idea which the one or other might

[†]) Such we may justly claim THE REVIEW to be, and therein lies OUR justification.—A. P.

[†]) "It is the first law of History that she dare not say, what is false, and that she have the courage to profess the whole truth without concealment."

possibly harbor, that such critical work, performed purely in the interest of the Church's honor, has got to fear a conflict with the ecclesiastical authorities.' His other remark, however, is entirely to the point: 'This (critical) work may not always meet with becoming recognition; there may arise at times objections of foolish and excessive zeal, branding the negative results of criticism as crimes against the sanctuary. But this is to be accepted calmly. Science must expose herself to the storms of life and not yield before opposition like a nervous woman.'*)

"We are aware that discussions of this kind may prove unpalatable to some, but there is no disputing about sentiments; we have a right however, to expect from those who are displeased, that they do not set up their qualms as a scandal in the Biblical and theological sense. Else every volume of the Bollandists, in fact every critical treatment of ancient legends would deserve the epithet 'scandalous.' Even if a few of those who are entirely ignorant in religious matters, would take offence, this would not go to prove the duty of suppressing the truth or, what is worse, of continuing to teach error. The Church knows no censure '*Ignorantiae offendens.*' This was also the opinion of Benedict XIV., as appears from a passage in his remarkable letter of June 7th, 1743, to Cardinal de Tencin, minister of the King of France, in which he tells those who might be inclined to censure him for diminishing the devotion shown to the saints by his contemplated reform of the Breviary: 'But such a criticism appears to us to be of less significance than the inevitable reproach that we allowed apocryphal or doubtful facts to be read in the name of the Church. It matters not if those who look upon all things related in ancient legends as so infallibly certain that they are ready to suffer martyrdom for the truth thereof,—it matters not, I say, if such persons raise a hue over the pruning of these legends.'")]

P. Holzapfel expressly disclaims any animosity on his part against the Dominicans, calling attention to the fact that as long as 150 years ago an eminent member of that Order wrote: that the Dominicans could well afford to bear with equanimity the attacks of the Bollandists upon the traditional origin of the Rosary, since neither the merits of their illustrious founder St. Dominic, nor the rights conferred upon the Order by the supreme pontiffs with regard to the devotion of the Rosary, could thereby be in any wise diminished.

For the benefit of "timid souls" he adds that the Rosary looses

*) See the Acts of the V. International Catholic Congress at Munich, 1901, pp. 139, 142. (Fr. Grisar's lecture was reproduced in full in THE REVIEW, vol. viii, No. 9.)

†) Dr. P. A. Kirsch, Die historischen Brevierlectionen. Wurzburg, 1902, p. 15.

naught either in import or value even if it can be proved that we do not derive it from St. Dominic.

II.

Our author's demonstration of his thesis, ["Rosarium a S. Dominico neque institutum neque propagatum est"] is divided into two parts,—one negative, the other positive.

The negative argument is to the effect that we have no contemporary authority whatsoever to prove that St. Dominic instituted or propagated or even knew the Rosary. Of the eighteen biographical sketches or notices published by the Bollandists, all of which undoubtedly date back to the thirteenth century, two or three were written by contemporaries of the Saint, several others received the approbation of the first General Chapter of the Dominican Order, while one, the '*Vitae Fratrum*' of Gerard of Fracheto, consists of reports submitted to the superiors of the Order by command of the General Chapter of 1256.

Not one of these eighteen sources contains a word about the Rosary in relation to St. Dominic. They tell us all the details of his laborious and meritorious life, about his successful activity against the Albigenses, about the visions which were vouchsafed to him ; but they say nothing at all about the Rosary. How can this be explained in the light of the generally accepted legend that the history of the Rosary is so intimately connected with St. Dominic that we can hardly picture his life without it?

More than that : in 1233 nine intimate friends of the then already departed Saint were examined by the inquisitors at Bologna by order of Pope Gregory IX., and although they were exhorted to tell, and did tell, under oath, whatever they knew about his person and his habits of life, including the smallest details, e. g., his manner of praying, his bearing and deportment, etc., they made not the slightest mention of the Rosary.

The same inquisitors later received the depositions of 300 witnesses in France, where St. Dominic had battled so successfully against the Albigenses. We have this testimony in the '*Epistola authentica qua subdelegati inquisitores Tolosani exponunt ea, quae circa virtutes et miracula S. Dominici ex testibus oculatis ac juratis audiverant.*'*) Among these three hundred witnesses were clerics and lay people, men and women, who all of them related many things in praise of the Saint and especially of his merits in fighting the heretics. Now if his victory over the Albigenses were attributable to the Rosary, and if St. Dominic had publicly proclaimed this devotion amid thunder and lightning, as the legend has it, surely the one or other of these many

*) *Acta SS., Aug., Tom. I., pp. 645—47; 527—28.*

witnesses would have referred to such a remarkable event. Yet not one of them did. Nowhere in all their testimony is there any mention of the Rosary.

Add to this the fact that the contemporary historians of the Albigensian wars are silent on the subject, as are also all the Dominican pulpit preachers of the thirteenth century whose sermons have come down to us. Nor do the oldest constitutions and decrees of the Dominican Order[†]] contain any reference to the Rosary, which would be absolutely inexplicable if it had really been a devotion introduced and recommended by the holy founder.

The obvious conclusion from these and other facts which we leave the reader to look up for himself in P. Holzapfel's brochure, is, that there is no trace in the sources of the thirteenth and fourteenth century of any relation of St. Dominic to the Rosary; hence, that such a relation did not exist. It is indeed an argument *ex silentio*, but it derives special valor from the fact that the above mentioned witnesses to the events which are supposed to have been intimately connected with the origin of the Rosary, were contemporary witnesses who could not possibly overlook any such important event and who were moreover bound under oath to tell the Church authorities what they knew about it. As they told absolutely nothing, no historian will accuse him of temerarious judgment who asserts: The legendary relation of the Saint to the Rosary must be denied so long as it is not clearly proven by authentic testimony from the thirteenth or at least the fourteenth century.

III.

We come to the second argument, which shows how the Rosary legend really originated. Up to the middle of the fifteenth century it must have been unknown, else the Dominicans Thomas Antony de Senis [d. after 1430], St. Antoninus [d. 1459], and John Lopez [d. after 1470] would have surely mentioned it in their biographies of St. Dominic.

The origin and spread of the popular legend is intimately connected with the name of one Alanus de Rupe [Alan de la Roche]. We know little about him beyond the fact that he was probably born in Britany, entered the French province of the Dominican Order, and received the bachelor's degree at Rostock in 1471. He died probably on September 8th, 1475.

It is not absolutely certain whether Alan is the author of the writings which are attributed to him and which are of such a nature that already in the eighteenth century an eminent critic de-

[†]) Cfr. the *Monumenta O. Pr.*, edited by P. Bened. Reichert.

clared it were better they had never been published.*] This much is certain, however,—that, being an ardent devotee of the Blessed Virgin, he was not only very active in spreading the Ave Maria and the Rosary, but also began to preach the “miracle of the Rosary” such as it has come down to us.

Alan, ‡] while attributing the genesis of the Rosary to St. Bartholomew the Apostle, declares that it was through St. Dominic that the devotion entered upon the most important period of its history. Already as a boy, he tells us, when ten years of age, the Saint had an apparition of the Virgin, who taught him to carry and recite the Rosary. He relates at length how St. Dominic, at Toulouse, in the midst of the great battle against the Albigensian heretics, prayed to Mary, and how she appeared to him, surrounded by fifty-three luminous virgins, and advised him to preach the Rosary if he would be successful; whereupon he proclaimed this pledge of victory amid thunder and lightning and trembling of the earth.†]

Alan concludes his strange and wonderful account with the asseveration: “*Et haec omnia piissima Dei Genitrix V. Maria cu-dam, quem despontavit per annulum et psalterium mirandum, ex crinibus ipsius virginis Mariae, in collo sponsi pendens, narravit visibiliter et sensibiliter, esse verissima.*”

This “sponsus” is none other than Alan himself, who relates that once upon a time, when, on the verge of despair in consequence of temptations, he was about to commit suicide, the Mother of God appeared to him, arrested his arm and boxed his ears. Soon after when he lay grievously ill, she again appeared and made him her “sponsus novellus.” “Post multa divina colloquia,” he relates, “*Virgo Lacte suo purissimo lethalia daemonum vulnera plurima perfudit et mox integrerrime consanavit. Simul hunc famulum suum (Alanum), Domino Jesu Christo praesente, multisque Sanctis circumsistentibus, Sibi despontavit: addiditque ei Annulum Virginitatis suae Virgineis de crinibus ipsius met Mariae concinne factum. Qui annulus gloriae est inexplicabilis, et inestimabilis; quem indutum digito gerit despontatus modo mirabili sic, ut a nemine videatur. Ipse autem persentit in eo certa adversus omnes diaboli attentationes auxilia. Pari modo Benedicta Virgo Dei Genitrix simul iniectam ei e collo suspendit*

*) H. Schuetz, S. J., *Comment. criticus de Scriptis et Scriptoribus historicis, Ingolstadii et Monachii 1761*, p. 51: “*Varia quidem sub ejus*

nomine prodire opuscula, quae tamen melius latuissent.”

‡) Fr. Holzapfel leaves the question undecided whether the author of the works under consideration was really Alanus de la Roche or

some other writer—a question of minor import, since the legend originated in writings which have come down to us under this name.

†) J. H. Coppenstein, O. P., *B. Alanus redivivus, Coloniae 1624*, pp. 90-95. P. Holzapfel quotes the passage in the original Latin. Some portions of it are untranslatable, e. g., this: “*Quem (S. Dominicum) illa (B. Virgo) in vir-*

gineos acceptum amplexus Osculo fixo dis-suaviabat; et apertis castissimi pectoris Uberibus appressum Lacte suo potavit, integreque restituit.”

Catenam ex Crinibus Virgineis contextam : in qua inserti haerent centum et quinquaginta lapides pretiosi, ac quindecim iuxta numerum Psalterii sui..... Post haec eadem Suavissima Domina Osculum ipsi impressit ; dedit et Ubera sugenda Virginea. De quibus ille sugens avide, videbatur sibi cunctis in membris, ac potentissimis irrigari, et transferri ad coelestia. Et saepius postmodum Alma Parens eandem ipsi gratiam contulit lactationis."

Nor did Alan intend all this to be understood in a mystical or metaphorical sense, for he gravely undertakes to explain in his apologia : "Quomodo lac Virginis Mariae tam gloriosum bibere potuit?" and "Quo ea modo decapillare se potuit, cum ad gloriam ejus capilli et decorem pertineant?"

P. Holzapfel quotes more of this stuff, which we will spare our readers.

Such are the contributions of Alan de la Roche to the history of the Rosary. The reader may judge for himself of the probable authenticity of such visions and revelations. As for the sources which he frequently pretends to quote, viz: the works of Johannes de Monte and Thomas de Templo, whom he represents as having been intimate disciples of Dominic and eye-witnesses of the miraculous events at Toulouse, they were admitted already two hundred years ago by an eminent Dominican writer to be "entirely fictitious,") and the Bollandists bluntly declare that Alan not only invented the story out of the whole cloth, but that the two alleged authors are creatures of his fertile imagination.†) The mildest judgment that can be passed on Alan's visions and revelations, in the opinion of Fr. Holzapfel, is that they were hallucinations ; and if we are inclined to believe him to have written in good faith, we must assume that he allowed himself to be shamefully imposed upon with regard to his alleged authorities.

A reconstruction of the legend, which sets up St. Dominic as the father of the Rosary, must have taken place in the first decades of the sixteenth century. Our author has gone carefully into this question and come to the conclusion that the Rosary, as we know it, does not date back farther than the twelfth century.

The rest of P. Holzapfel's brochure is devoted to the victorious refutation of certain objections that have been raised against his thesis.

His final conclusion is : "Our investigation has shown that the commonly received opinion with regard to the origin of the Rosary is untenable ; but it has also shown that much remains to be done before a complete history of the devotion can be written. The following propositions may be taken to be well es-

^{*)} Echard, Scriptores O. Praed., I, 473 sq.—Acta SS., l. c., p. 362.

†] Acta SS., l. c., p. 366.

tablished : The Rosary, like every other popular devotion, has developed gradually. In some form or other it may have been recited before the year 1,000. We have no more definite reports dating back farther than the twelfth century. From the twelfth to the fifteenth century we meet with but few who cultivated this devotion, until the time of Alan de la Roche, who propagated it with great zeal. His activity was successful ; one hundred years after his death, mainly through the efforts of the Dominicans, the Rosary had become a truly popular devotion. It is to be regretted that the fables of Alan were gradually received in good faith and that in consequence the person of St. Dominic has, without any historical warrant, become intimately connected with the Rosary."

* * *

"THE SHOCK OF ENTRANCE" IN AMERICAN FREEMASONRY.

Let us now knock at the door of Masonry as "Entered Apprentice" and seek more information on the subject of religion. We had heard that religious matters were sedulously excluded from the lodges. This, however, from what we have learned, we know is not true, since the purposes of Masonry are essentially religious. Religious quarrels are excluded [p. 249] but not religion. Mackey's Ritualist opens the portals to us and allows us to assist at the Entered Apprentice's lecture [p. 22]:

"The first section of the Entered Apprentice's lecture," it says, "principally consists of a recapitulation of the ceremonies of initiation. But on this account, a knowledge of it is highly necessary to every Mason, that he may be the better enabled to assist in the correct performance of the ritual of the degree. It is, however, introduced by some general heads which qualify us to examine the rights of others to our privileges, while they prove our claim to the character we profess.

"It is of course impossible in a monitorial work to give a full explanation of the various symbols and ceremonies which are used in the inculcation of moral and religious truths ; but an allusion, in even general terms, to the most important ones, in the order in which they occur, will be sufficient to lead the contemplative Mason to a further examination of the subject."

We sincerely regret that at times we must be content with mere allusions in the explanation of the symbols that are used to inculcate moral and religious truths in Masonry ; but we thank our Guide for advising us beforehand of the fact. We shall take advantage of allusions to look more carefully into them than we might otherwise have done. In no allusion, however, but in clear English, he tells us of the inculcation of religious truth in

Masonry. For this we thank him ; and we thank him for more.

"In the symbolic science of Masonry," he tells us [p. 22], "the Lodge is often represented as the symbol of life. In this case, Lodge labor becomes the symbol of the labor of life, its duties, trials, and temptations, and the Mason is the type of the laborer and actor in that life. The Lodge is, then, at the time of the reception of the Entered Apprentice, a symbol of the world, and the initiation is a type of the new life upon which the candidate is about to enter. There he stands without our portals, on the threshold of this new Masonic life, in darkness, helplessness, and ignorance. Having been wandering among the errors and covered over with the pollutions of the outer and profane world, he comes enquiringly to our doors, seeking the new birth and asking for a withdrawal of the veil which conceals divine truth from his uninitiated sight. And here, as with Moses at the burning bush, the solemn admonition is given : 'Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground'; and the ceremonial preparations surround him, all of a significant character, to indicate to him that some great change is about to take place in his moral and intellectual condition. He is already beginning to discover that the design of Masonry is to introduce him to new views of life and its duties. He is indeed to commence with new lessons in a new school. There is not merely to be a change for the future but a total extinction of the past; for initiation is, as it were, a death to the world and a resurrection to a new life. And hence it was that among the old Greeks the same word signifies both to die and to be initiated. But death to him that believes in immortality is but a new birth. Now this new birth should be accompanied by some ceremony to indicate symbolically and to impress upon the mind, this disruption of old ties and formation of new ones. Hence the impression of this idea is made by the symbolism of the Shock at the entrance. The world is left behind—the chains of error and ignorance which had previously restrained the candidate in moral and intellectual captivity are broken—the portal of the Temple has been thrown widely open, and Masonry stands before the neophyte in all the glory of its form and beauty, to be fully revealed to him, however, only when the new birth shall be fully accomplished" [p. 23].

"The Shock of Entrance is then the symbol of the disruption of the candidate from the ties of the world, and his introduction into the life of Masonry. It is the symbol of the agonies of the first death, and the throes of the new birth" [p. 24].

No wonder that the candidate is "shocked" when he "begins to discover" the real design of Masonry. He is discovering what perhaps he never imagined before, what certainly he did not know,

for else there would be no "discovery." He thought that he was joining an association which was purely social and charitable, whose purposes were material help and assistance, and he begins to find out that its design is quite a different one. It aims at effecting a great moral and intellectual transformation in him. It tells him that all the old ties that bound him must be disrupted. "All?" he asks. "All," it answers. "You must die to the past to receive the Masonic birth. It is not 'a mere change for the future, it is a total extinction of the past.' You have wandered up to the present time in error and pollution. You stand at my door in darkness, helplessness, and ignorance. Divine Truth is hidden from your eyes and you are asking now that the veil that hid it from your uninitiated sight be withdrawn." "But," stammers the candidate, "I-I-didn't come exactly for that. I thought that being a Mason would help me to obtain office or to keep my employment. I was also told that Masons were a companionable lot of fellows, and that there!would be no harm in joining them. I have always tried to be a moral man—and, as regards divine truth—I thought that that belonged to the domain of religion and that religious discussion was excluded from the lodges. Besides, having been brought up a Catholic, I-I-thought that I possessed divine truth. I knew that I was going against the will of my Church in joining Masonry, but I never thought that I would have to change my faith. I was'nt told that." "These," answers Masonry, "are only the agonies of the first death, and the throes of the new birth. They are only proofs of your darkness, helplessness, and ignorance. I must change your mental and moral condition. When the veil that conceals divine truth from your uninitiated eyes will be removed, you will know this truth in the fulness of Masonic light."

This, therefore, is the design of Masonry, plainly enunciated, to impart to its candidates what it calls divine truth, and according to this divine truth to fashion their intellectual and moral nature. This is evidently the work of religion. To Masonry, all outside itself is the profane world. The ties that bind the Mason to this world, all the ties, must be disrupted, that the new birth may be accomplished and the new moral and intellectual and religious or irreligious Masonic life be lived.

Does the conscience of the candidate rebel? Does his reason tell him clearly that before disrupting the ties of the past and blindly committing his eternal destinies to the uncertainties of the future, he should first closely examine the credentials of Masonry to be the teacher of divine truth?—that before binding himself to believe and practise a religious system, he should have a clear knowledge of that system in all its parts? "These," he is

told, "are but the agonies of the first death and the throes of the new birth. This is no time for qualms of conscience; there is now no turning back; the die is cast and the Entered Apprentice must bear the shock and abide by the result. Are not the declarations made to the Senior Deacon in the ante-room of the lodge and in the presence of the Stewards still upon his lips?"—:

"Do you seriously declare, upon your honor, that unbiassed by the improper solicitations of friends, and uninfluenced by mercenary motives, you freely and voluntarily offer yourself a candidate for the mysteries of Masonry?"

"I do."

"Do you sincerely declare, upon your honor, that you are prompted to solicit the privileges of Masonry by a favorable opinion conceived of the institution, and a desire of knowledge?"

"I do."

"Do you seriously declare, upon your honor, that you will cheerfully conform to all the ancient usages and established customs of the fraternity?"

"I do." [Mackey's Ritualist, pp. 21-22.]

With such declarations has Masonry already bound him. He has freely and voluntarily offered himself as candidate; he has expressed his favorable opinion of the institution and has asked to be instructed; he has promised blindly to conform to the customs of the fraternity—the shock of entrance will be more or less rude, according to the moral and intellectual condition of the candidate, but having given his word of honor he can not recede.

The "Shock of Entrance" is, however, but a symbol. It represents what we have already touched upon, viz: "The Shock of Enlightenment." Of this next week.



AN IMPORTANT DECISION OF THE U. S. COURT OF APPEALS in re MUTUAL BENEFIT SOCIETIES.

A recent decision of the U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals, (reported in the Philadelphia *Inquirer* of June 16th, 1903) is of vast importance not only to the members of the Legion of Honor directly concerned, but also to the many thousands of members of fraternal assessment "insurance" societies holding similar contracts.

The facts are given as follows: Hugh W. Black held since March, 1883, a certificate of the Legion, providing for a payment of \$5,000 in case of his death, conditioned upon his responding to assessment calls. Some time after the corporation adopted an

amendment to the by-laws, providing "that \$2,000 shall be the highest amount paid by the order on the death of a member, upon any benefit heretofore or hereafter issued."

Black did not assent to this, and having complied with all the terms of his contract, brought suit to recover all the money paid into the concern, together with accrued interest. Judge Dallas, after hearing testimony and arguments on both sides, decided in favor of the plaintiff.

The Appellate Court, after reviewing a number of similar cases, finds that the defendant corporation had lawful authority to make the contract. It had also the power, though not the right, to repudiate it and this it, did by the amendment to its by-laws.

A decree was issued by the same court affirming the judgment of the lower court in the case of Wm. H. Henderson against the Legion. The same points were involved and decided.

The American Legion of Honor started as an assessment insurance company, regardless of scientific principles, and had the usual experience of such concerns. When the income was no longer sufficient to meet the ever increasing losses, the benefits were reduced by amendment to by-laws. The result is shown above, and as the concern is not prepared to return to all its members the money paid in, let alone accumulated interest, the outcome can be easily foretold. Unfortunately a number of Catholic insurance societies are now, or will soon find themselves, in a similar situation regarding income and death losses. The "scaling" process was very popular up to date, since the members for some reason were more easily satisfied with a decrease of expected benefits, than with the only other alternative, an increase of contributions while from a legal point of view much depends upon the wording of the contract, (certificate of membership) and the rule applied to the Legion of Honor may not apply to all of the Catholic societies. Yet the principles involved are the same in all such cases, and in view of the court's decision it were only common prudence, not to speak of justice, for all our Catholic insurance societies not already established on a permanent basis, to promptly reorganize without "scaling" the benefits promised to members.



BOOK REVIEWS AND LITERARY NOTES.

Ne Obliviscaris. A Daily Reminder of Our Dead. Compiled by Florence Radcliffe. London: Sands & Co. St. Louis: B. Herder. 1903. Price 75cts. net.

It used to be the fashion, (and is still for ought we know), to keep a "birth-day book" containing a quotation from some great writer for each day in the year, in which the autographs of friends were set opposite the day of their birth. The Church does not celebrate the birth-days of her favorite children. She chooses rather to commemorate the days of their deliverance from the trials of this mortal life and their joyful entrance into Paradise. So she sings the praises of the saint on the day when he finished his course in triumph and "laetus meruit beatas scandere sedes." This little book follows the plan of the birth-day book. We are to set opposite the date of their deaths the names of our loved ones departed, so that we may remember to pray for them. For each day there is a sentiment relative to the holy souls,—sometimes quoted, sometimes original. A more practical, effective, and at the same time tender method of cultivating devotion to the souls in purgatory we have yet to learn. 'Ne Obliviscaris' is certain to be most acceptable and will be a boon to the poor souls.



Rambles Through Europe, the Holy Land and Egypt. By Rev. A. Zurbansen. B. Herder, St. Louis. 1903. Price \$1.

A description of an extended trip taken by the author. Tourists will find therein useful information, while the stay-at-home, who must see the sights of the great world through the eyes of others, will find much to interest him and excite his wonder and admiration.



A Daughter of the Sierras. By Christian Reid. B. Herder, St. Louis. Price \$1.25.

The scene of this story is laid in Mexico, and the author has so vividly pictured the wild grandeur of the mountainous region of which she writes, as to make a most attractive back-ground for the exciting incidents of the tale. For the rest, the writer is too well known to Catholic readers to need introduction or commendation.



In the Shadow of the Manse. By Austin Rock. London: Sands & Co. St. Louis: B. Herder. Net \$1.

A bright little controversial story, which will furnish the everyday champion of the faith with many sound arguments. The

didactic element is too pronounced to admit of an artistic development of the plot, and the form, being that of the romance, forces the instructive part of the work into second place. Strange to say, this warring of elements does not mar the interest of the book, which is lively from first to last.

Lecture on The Signs of the Times, by the V. Rev. Aloysius M. Blakely, C. P., Vicar General of Nicopolis, Bulgaria.

This lecture was delivered by V. Rev. Fr. Blakely at the Philadelphia Cathedral on Palm Sunday of the current year. It shows the alarming growth, in our present-day society, of infidelity, which, unless checked, is bound to lead to the overthrow of legitimate government and the destruction of religion.

The proceeds go towards the erection of a seminary for the Bulgarians. Nicopolis has been in charge of the Passionist Fathers since 1780. Address: Au Très Rév. Père A. M. Blakely, C. P., Evêché Catholique, à Roustchouk, Bulgaria.

—The *Civiltà Cattolica* (quad. 1269) discusses “a new way of writing the lives of the saints,” giving special attention to the Joly series (“The Saints”) and in particular criticizing the recently published life of St. Gaëtan by R. De Maulde La Clavière, whose work is declared to make the Saint out as much more prone to human weakness than is compatible with his real character and with his canonization by the Church.

The *Stimmen aus Maria-Laach* (No. 4) express certain reserves with regard to the introductory volume of the “Saints” series, ‘The Psychology of the Saints,’ by the editor, M. Joly, and severely criticize Pingaud’s ‘Saint Pierre Fourier,’ which “is a pamphlet parading under the colors of the biography of a saint” and “must inspire us with cautious reserve towards the whole series.”

—We are indebted to His Eminence Cardinal Satolli for a copy of the new French edition of his ‘Conferenze Storico-Giuridiche di Dritto Pubblico Ecclesiastico,’ published by the Abbé Aug. Lury, D. D., V. G., under the title: ‘Études Historiques et Juridiques sur les Origines du Droit Public Ecclésiastique.’ (Paris: H. Oudin, Editeur. 1902.) We shall give the book a more extended notice later.



MINOR TOPICS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE REVIEW.—*Sir:*

I find in your No. 22 a letter from Msgr. Baumgarten of Munich, on a communication of mine in No. 16 on the subject of Catholic legends and their true character in history. I have not the article before me now, as I am on my way across the continent to Europe, so will ask excuse if my memory fail to accurately bring back its details. However, I believe, I only called attention to the fact that things "unauthenticated" are not necessarily "spurious" and suggested that Catholic charity seems to call on Catholics not to use needlessly offensive terms in discussion among themselves, or indeed with anyone. I think I also pointed out that the staple of all history which has passed into literature, is made up of traditions, most of which have not been submitted to strict judicial investigation and in fact are incapable of it. This fact seems to be often overlooked by writers on historical criticism. Cardinal Wiseman, e. g., in one of his works mentions how a distinguished German scholar searched for years for the legal proof of the reason for the transfer of the Council of Trent from one Italian city to another in the course of its history. The transfer itself was a matter of true history for over two hundred years before the medical certificate on which it was based was published to the outside world. In the mean time it might be called "unauthenticated," but it would be incorrect as well as offensive to term it "spurious."

I tried to illustrate the same principle by calling attention to the fact that Scott's historical romances contain much of true historic fact in their own way and that Catholic legends may do the same. If the eminent prelate differs with me in either of those points, I shall be open to conviction of my errors; but he gives no indication of his opinion in his communication.

I alluded *en passant* to the thesis of Father Holzapfel (whose name I did not mention nor even know) on Loretto, to ask one or two questions on its arguments. I did so in perfect good faith, and as far as I recollect, I only asked the names and dates of the particular "bulls of the Popes," somewhat clumsily described as "the bulls of the Popes" generally, which established conclusively that the long received Catholic traditions on the subject of the Holy House were without historical basis. The 'eminent prelate' does not answer this question. He merely treats it as an impertinence on my part, laments my lack of historical training, and expresses his surprise that any man who wished to be taken seriously should make them. Now, as a matter of fact, there are numerous alleged papal bulls which are more or less doubtful in a historic view, and it does not seem to me unwarrantable for even a layman to ask the name of those relied on by P. Holzapfel to establish his thesis. The eminent prelate assures me, my question shows I have "not even an elementary knowledge of the problem as such;" I must own I fail to see why, *pace praelati dicti*.

Even though only a layman, I must confess I am not prepared to accept the fact that a thesis for the doctorate maintained before a German university faculty must therefore be an absolutely authentic and unobjectionable demonstration. I fear human fallibility may attach even to the learning of a German university,

as well as to the best of mankind in its ordinary condition. I am not prepared to pin faith on the accuracy of Dr. Döllinger or many others who have attained the doctorate in such institutions, much as I respect German scholarship as such.

The last question addressed to my humble self : "Does Mr. Clinch really imagine that Professor Knöpfler neglected to inform himself respecting such elementary points as he adduces?"—I can easily answer. I never imagined anything on the subject, never knew that the Doctor in question had anything to do in the matter, and to my shame must confess, had not even heard of his name in the connection. I can hardly then have thrown any discredit on his name. I shall read P. Holzapfel's thesis with much pleasure and must disclaim the title of its critic in the mean time. It seems to me what I have written in THE REVIEW can not be affected materially in its conclusions. If the Munich eminent prelate thinks otherwise, I shall be most thankful if he will point out how.—BRYAN J. CLINCH.

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Archbishop Fischer of Cologne, in a recent circular to his clergy, recommends to them greater simplicity and moderation in building. He says that to erect splendid and luxurious rectories, veritable palaces, creates a bad impression. The spirit of poverty which should distinguish the clergy from the laity, should appear also in their residences, which ought to be commodious and well-furnished, but not luxurious. Highly ornamental and expensive priests' houses, he says, "are a scandal not only to the poor who hardly dare to enter them, but also to well-to-do Catholics who justly expect their shepherds to cultivate sacerdotal simplicity and moderation ; they diminish and undermine the spiritual influence of the clergy, often lay a heavy burden on the parishes, and challenge the criticism of malicious outsiders." He adds that he will in future refuse to approve the building of rectories if the plans do not accord with these principles.

Msgr. Fischer also disapproves of splendid church edifices in poor parishes where the money must be raised by house collections. He does not even like to see comparatively wealthy congregations spend large sums upon the decoration of their churches. "It is quite true," he says, "that for the service of God *per se* nothing is too precious. But I must confess—and I believe I speak the Master's mind—that my heart bleeds when I see here and there how for a single piece of church furniture, such as a communion railing, sums of money are expended which would almost suffice to build a small church; and when I consider, on the other hand, how many of our Catholic brethren living scattered among non-Catholics, have no place of worship or are compelled to hear mass in a public hall or an old barn containing little more than a table for an altar, no communion railing, no pulpit, vestments threadbare and sacred vessels of the poorest and cheapest."

These common-sense reflections are applicable everywhere, even here in the United States where thousands are used for merely ornamental purposes which could be far better employed in assisting poor, struggling parishes in the North, West, and South, and in establishing missions where they are sorely needed.

